

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9085

JCS IMMEDIATE

INFO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SEOUL 2043

JOINT EMBASSY/CINCUNC MESSAGE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, KS, KN

SUBJECT: INSPECTION OF NORTH KOREAN TUNNEL

1. NOW THAT THE SECOND NORTH KOREAN TUNNEL - A SPECTACULAR ENGINEERING FEAT WITH SERIOUS MILITARY IMPLICATIONS - IS ACCESSAZLE, ENORMOUS PRESSURES ORIGINATING AT HIGHEST LEVELS OF ROKG HAVE DEVELOPED TO PERMIT INSPECTION BY VARIOUS KOREAN AND FOREIGN ENTITIES. THE ROKG CLEARLY WISHES - AND CONSIDERS IT THEIR RIGHT - TO REAP PSYCHOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL BENEFITS FROM PERHAPS THE MOST FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF THE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT IN RECENT YEARS. ROKG HAS IN FACT ALREADY SENT 10 MAN GROUP FROM NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEFENSE COMMITTEE (ALL RETIRED MILITARY OFFICERS, IN UNIFORM WITH ARM-BANDS FOR OCCASION) TO TUNNEL SITE AND HAS INVITED PRESS AND DIPLOMATIC CORPS TO MAKE VISITS IN NEAR FUTURE. EMBASSY/CINCUNC AGREE THAT IN VIEW OF ROKG PRESSURES IT VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO PREVENT ALL VISITS AND, IN FACT, THAT THOSE IMMEDIATELY PROJECTED WOULD SERVE USEFUL  
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PURPOSE. PROBLEMS, HOWEVER, ARE TO ENSURE THAT

VISITS ARE HELD TO NECESSARY MINIMUM AND TO ESTABLISH GROUND RULES AND CONTROL PROCEDURES TO KEEP THOSE VISITS WHICH DO OCCUR MANAGEABLE IN SIZE AND CONDUCT. THESE POINTS WILL BE MADE STRONGLY TO ROK COUNTERPARTS.

2. AS A FIRST STEP, CINCUNC HAS INFORMED AND HAS CONCURRENCE OF MND THAT:

(A) EVERY PRECAUTION MUST BE TAKEN TO INSURE THE SAFETY OF SUCH VISITORS AS MAY BE AUTHORIZED ENTRY INTO THE TUNNEL; HAZARDS CAN AND WILL BE REDUCED TO MINIMUM PROPORTIONS THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF EOD SPECIALISTS AND STRICT ADHERENCE TO CONTROL PROCEDURES.

(B) APPROPRIATE MILITARY AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN CHARGED WITH THE TASK OF CLEARING THE TUNNEL AND WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONTROL PROCEDURES FOR VISITORS. THIS WORK IS EXPECTED TO BE ACCOMPLISHED IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

(C) CINCUNC WILL INFORM MND WHEN, IN HIS JUDGMENT, ACCESS TO THE TUNNEL IS REASONABLY SAFE FOR NON-MILITARY VISITORS. ONLY AFTER SUCH NOTIFICATION WILL VISITS BE PERMITTED.

3. AS TO PROJECTED VISITS, AT MARCH 20 MOFA BRIEFING TO DIPLOMATIC CORPS ON TUNNEL DISCOVERY, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION FROM MALAYSIAN AMBASSADOR, ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER STATED THAT MND HAD ALREADY AGREED THAT DIPLOMATS WOULD BE PERMITTED TO VISIT TUNNEL AREA. CHARGE AT THAT POINT INTERJECTED THAT VISITS BY DIPLOMATIC CORPS REQUIRE PRIOR NOTIFICATION TO NORTH KOREANS THROUGH MAC UNDER ARMISTICE AGREEMENT. CHARGE WAS MISTAKEN ON THIS POINT AND HAS SUBSEQUENTLY INFORMED BOTH ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER AND DEAN OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS OF ARMISTICE AGREEMENT ARTICLE 1, PARAGRAPH 9, REQUIREMENT THAT ENTRY INTO DMZ BY PERSONNEL OTHER THAN AUTHORIZED MILITARY AND PRESS CALLS FOR MAC APPROVAL RATHER THAN NOTIFICATION TO THE MAC. MEANWHILE, WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH EITHER CINCUNC OR EMBASSY, MOFA HAS  
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ISSUED INVITATIONS TO CHIEFS OF MISSION THROUGH DEAN OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS FOR SITE VISITS ON APRIL 2 AND 3. TWENTY-THREE OF SEOUL'S TWENTY-SIX CHIEFS OF MISSION HAVE ACCEPTED THIS INVITATION.

4. WE WILL HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH PRESS VISIT, SUBSEQUENT TO COMPLETION OF STEPS OUTLINED IN PARA 2, SINCE UP TO 100 NEWSMEN ARE SPECIFICALLY

ALLOWED WITHIN THE DMZ UNDER SUBSEQUENT AGREEMENT  
TO ARMISTICE AGREEMENT REACHED AT 19TH MAC MEETING;  
ONLY "NOTIFICATION" OF NORTH REQUIRED IN THIS CASE.

5. THE PROJECTED VISIT BY DIPLOMATIC CORPS REQUIRES  
SPECIAL HANDLING. BECAUSE OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE  
NORTH'S TUNNEL VIOLATION, DESIRABILITY OF HAVING  
VERIFICATION BY THIRD COUNTRY DIPLOMATC (MANY OF WHOM  
ARE SKEPTICAL), AND DESIRABILITY OF AVOIDING SPLIT  
WITH ROKS, WHO ARE PUBLICLY COMMITTED TO  
TOURS (AND WHO MIGHT WELL PROCEED AGAINST OUR  
WISHES), EMBASSY/CINCUNC BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL  
TO PERMIT THOSE CHIEFS OF MISSION WHO WISH TO VISIT  
TUNNEL TO DO SO. SINCE THE POINT OF ACCESS TO THE  
TUNNEL IS IN FULL DEFILADE AND LOCAL GROUND SECURITY  
IS EXTENSIVE, THE DANGER TO ANY GROUP OUTSIDE THE  
TUNNEL IS CONSIDERED NIL; DURING THE FOUR MONTHS OF  
INTENSIVE, ROUND-THE-CLOCK DRILLING OPERATIONS, THERE  
HAS BEEN ABSOLUTELY NO NORTH KOREAN REACTION.  
SUBSEQUENT TO THE NEUTRALIZATION WORK THAT CINCUNC NOW  
HAS IN TRAIN, HAZARDS WITHIN THE TUNNEL ITSELF WILL BE  
REDUCED TO NEGLIGIBLE PROPORTIONS FOR THE  
TWO OR THREE VISITORS PERMITTED IN THE TUNNEL AT ANY ONE  
TIME. NONETHELESS, ALL VISITORS WILL BE WARNED THAT THEY  
PROCEED AT THEIR OWN RISK.

6. THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM, THEREFORE, IS THE PROCEDURE  
FOR NOTIFICATION TO THE OTHER SIDE THROUGH MAC CHANNELS.  
CINCUNC HAS RULED OUT ANY CONCEPT OF NO NOTICE SINCE  
INEVITABLY THERE WILL BE PRESS ACCOUNTS (INDEED, THAT IS  
ONE OF THE OBJECTIVES) AND THESE, IN TURN, WOULD TRIGGER  
DPRK CHARGES OF ARMISTICE VIOLATION. CONSEQUENTLY IT IS  
CINCUNC'S INTENT SIMPLY TO MAKE ADVANCE NOTIFICATION OF  
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DIPLOMATIC CORPS VISIT THROUGH MAC CHANNELS AS IS DONE  
WITH THE PRESS. NOTIFICATION WOULD BE PREFACED BY  
ADMISSION THAT SUCH ENTRY CONSTITUTES A VIOLATION;  
THAT THIS VIOLATION IS JUSTIFIED BY THE EXTREME  
SERIOUSNESS OF THE ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IN THE NORTH,  
INSPECTION OF WHICH IS THE SOLE PURPOSE OF ENTRY; AND  
THAT THE VISITORS WILL BE UNARMED, NON-COMBATANTS WHOSE  
PRESENCE IN THE DMZ CONSTITUTES NO THREAT TO THE NORTH.  
IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT THE NORTH WOULD PROTEST.  
WE NONETHELESS CONSIDER THAT THIS IS THE ONLY  
PRACTICAL WAY OF HANDLING THIS VISIT.  
ERICSON

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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